

CHRIST THE MASTER SPEAKER



GRENVILLE KLEISER

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**CHRIST
THE MASTER SPEAKER**

By Grenville Kleiser

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CHRIST

THE MASTER SPEAKER

BY

GRENVILLE KLEISER

Formerly Instructor in Public Speaking at Yale Divinity School, Yale University. Author of "How to Speak in Public," "Great Speeches and How to Make Them," "Complete Guide to Public Speaking," "How to Build Mental Power," "Talks on Talking," etc., etc.



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PREFACE

Comparatively few students of public speaking have thought of studying Christ's method of delivery. This book, therefore, suggests a new and important field of inquiry.

The supreme element in Christ's speaking was its authoritativeness. His clear, definite, vital message had the weight of eternity behind it. Absolutely convinced of the truth of his message, "He spoke as one having authority, and not as the Scribes."

As one has well said, "The form of Christ's teaching was as varied and as simple as were its methods. It was the spontaneous outcome of the requirements of the moment. Whatever was most exactly needed for the defense

PREFACE

of a truth, or the blighting of an hypocrisy, or the startling of self-satisfaction into penitence, or the consolation of despondency, was instantaneously clothed in its best form, whether of reproach, or question, or deep irony, or tender apostrophe, or exquisitely poetic image.”

Every public speaker, whether he be business man, lawyer, clergyman, or statesman may learn valuable lessons from this exalted example. Since a public speaker should be, in the best sense, a man of sterling character and of lofty purpose, he can not do better than to study the style and method of the Supreme Speaker of all time.

GRENVILLE KLEISEB.

New York City,
August, 1919.

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THE MASTER SPEAKER

Never man spake like this man.

—JOHN 7:46.

THE MASTER SPEAKER

By Grenville Kleiser

It is natural for the earnest student of public speaking to seek the highest model for study and inspiration. Demosthenes has generally been regarded as the greatest orator of all time, and his method and style have been widely recommended for imitation. Christ has been thought too divine to be classified with so-called orators, hence few students have felt permitted to study his incomparable speaking style. The fact, however, that he was God incarnate should not make him less a model for those who would speak with earnestness and power. The same reasons for studying and developing the great attributes which he manifested in his life

CHRIST: THE MASTER SPEAKER

would equally apply to the study of his style and power of expression.

Christ had a perfect understanding of the message he was to deliver. He also had a perfect understanding of the human heart. He was perfect God (Rom. 9:5) and perfect man (Heb. 2:16). Adaptability, earnestness, sympathy, directness, and simplicity were combined in him in preeminent degree. In speaking to the people he was dominated by a consuming passion to convince them that what he was saying was the truth and that it was vital to their welfare. He was not content with theorizing, but always spoke that his joy might be theirs and that their joy might be full.

THE SUPREME MODEL

Christ is, therefore, the supreme model for every public speaker. The

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chief characteristics of his speaking are clearly recorded in history, and it will be highly beneficial for the student of public speaking to give earnest attention to the Master's style and method.

Christ knew the people whom he addressed. He was thoroughly intimate with their weaknesses and shortcomings. He spoke out of the serene consciousness that men needed his message whether they realized it or not. He was constantly impelled by a divine sense of duty to be performed. He spoke with the highest authority of matters which vitally concerned the people.

There was no apology, no equivocation, no uncertainty. He was absolutely convinced of the truth of which he spoke. His clear, definite, vital message had the weight of eternity behind it,

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and men felt this fact. His message was from God, and "He spoke as one having authority."

He possessed everything necessary to make his message real and rational. His disinterested love, personal conviction, and supreme character, combined in his person the perfect human and divine natures.

There was a vast difference between the instruction he gave the people and the sophistry to which they had been accustomed. He spoke plainly and fearlessly upon the greatest themes that engage the minds of men. His manner and style indicated a unique knowledge and sublime authority. He had a message pulsating with reality which touched the fundamental experience of the human heart, and which he adapted with marvelous skill to the needs of his hearers.

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There was the unmistakable note of absolute certainty and truthfulness in his utterances. His own consciousness of right was a tremendous attractive force which drew the multitude to him. He demonstrated in supreme degree that nothing is so eloquent as truth.

THE SECRETS OF POWER

The force and power of Christ's speaking lay in the character of his life and the truth which he taught. The vital secret of his success in speaking to the people consisted principally in his gradually fulfilling all the great expectations of the good, well-meaning and truly enlightened portion of the Jewish people. Christ was to come, and did come, and spoke as no man ever spoke before.

His message was urgent and insistent. The salvation of the world de-

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pended upon it. Hence, his intense interest in men and his desire to serve them without any concern for his own welfare. There was in him a combination of three things to which every speaker should aspire: Sympathy with the people whom he address; confidence in his divine mission; and directness in his manner of delivery.

The effectiveness of Christ's speaking lay in the fact that he spoke not because he had to say something, but because he had something to say. He was God incarnate, speaking about the things of God, doing God's work. Because he knew what he wanted to say there was the stamp of genuineness and earnestness upon all his utterances. His pointed and original sayings, simply and clearly illustrated from everyday life, compelled men to listen and think.

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He had perfect assurance, arising from the fact that he not only knew the truth, but was the truth. His intense conviction that his teaching was absolute truth caused him to make an irresistible appeal to his hearers. His knowledge of men, his loving sympathy, his simplicity, as well as his deep earnestness, touched the inner springs of his fellow men.

The gospels do not tell us anything definitely about the voice of Christ. It is a reasonable inference, however, that as he was a perfect man physically, his voice was as perfect as his body. How would a man speak the parables, especially that of the Prodigal Son? How would a man utter the promises and invitations that fell from his lips? His recorded speech in its tenderness, pathos, and simplicity, gives an indication of his speaking voice.

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It is reasonable to think that such a pure soul and sympathetic nature made itself felt in the very accents of his utterance and that his voice must have had a quality which strongly appealed to the earnest minds and hearts of his hearers.

His speaking voice was doubtless clear, sweet, and strong. It was expressive and impressive. He probably used the middle register of his voice in his ordinary speaking. He was always natural, always earnest, at times pathetic, but never boisterous. His voice combined tenderness with authority. It was usually low, gentle, deliberate, and conversational, tho at times when he poured forth invective against Scribes and Pharisees it must have assumed a powerful and penetrating force.

He spoke principally on a subject

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which interested his hearers: the Kingdom of God. He was filled with love for them. He used illustrations which appealed to them. Naturalness, simplicity, lucidity, sympathy, moral intensity, fearlessness, and fidelity to his great mission, were striking characteristics of his great work.

THE SERMON ON THE
MOUNT

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

FOREWORD

This great sermon is remarkable for its directness and simplicity. The reiteration of the word "Blessed" has a striking effect in securing the attention of the hearers.

Carefully note the tone of authority. The great speaker does not once use the word "probably," or "perhaps," but "I say unto you." His teaching is definite and complete. Every word is emphatic.

His use of antithesis is significant and convincing.

This magnificent sermon, which can be rendered in deliberate style in twenty

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minutes, embraces everything that makes for a well-rounded life. Into the smallest possible space is packed the vital secrets of right living. It tells us to be forgiving, unselfish, pure, loving, trustful, self-sacrificing, obedient, confident, righteous.

It is the supreme message of all time.

The Sermon on the Mount

THE INTRODUCTION

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed

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are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill can not be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candle-

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stick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

THE DISCUSSION

Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness

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of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore, if you bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at

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any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath

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been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

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Ye have heard that it hath been said,
An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a
tooth: But I say unto you, That ye
resist not evil: but whosoever shall
smite thee on thy right cheek, turn
to him the other also. And if any
man will sue thee at the law, and
take away thy coat, let him have thy
cloak also. And whosoever shall com-
pel thee to go a mile, go with him
twain. Give to him that asketh thee,
and from him that would borrow of
thee turn not thou away.

Ye have heard that it hath been
said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and
hate thine enemy. But I say unto you,
Love your enemies, bless them that
curse you, do good to them that hate
you, and pray for them which despite-
fully use you, and persecute you; That
ye may be the children of your Father
which is in heaven; for he maketh his

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may

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be in secret and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy

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Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can

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not serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O

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ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to

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thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye. Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father

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which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree can not bring forth evil

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fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

THE CONCLUSION

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain

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descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock: And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

NOTABLE SAYINGS OF
CHRIST

NOTABLE SAYINGS OF CHRIST

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

—John 8, 12.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

—John 10, 10.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

—Matthew 6, 33.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

—Matthew 7, 12.

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Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

—Matthew 11, 28.

He that is not with me is against me.

—Matthew 12, 30.

A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.

—Matthew 13, 57.

Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

—Matthew 10, 19.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

—Matthew 16, 24.

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain,

NOTABLE SAYINGS OF CHRIST

Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

—Matthew 17, 20.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.

—Matthew 19, 24.

Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

—Matthew 19, 30.

Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

—Matthew 22, 21.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

—Matthew 22, 37.

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Heaven and earth shall pass away,
but my words shall not pass away.

—Matthew 24, 35.

For unto every one that hath shall
be given, and he shall have abundance:
but from him that hath not shall be
taken away even that which he hath.

—Matthew 25, 29.

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto
one of the least of these my brethren,
ye have done it unto me.

—Matthew 25, 40.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not
into temptation: the spirit indeed is
willing, but the flesh is weak.

—Matthew 26, 41.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek,
and ye shall find; knock, and it shall
be opened unto you.

—Matthew 7, 7.

NOTABLE SAYINGS OF CHRIST

Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

—Luke 6, 27-28.

Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

—Luke 6, 41.

No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

—Luke 9, 62.

The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

—Luke 11, 34.

In my Father's house are many man-

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sions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

—John 14, 2.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

—John 14, 15.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

—John 3, 16.

A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

—Luke 12, 15.

I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

—Luke 15, 10.

NOTABLE SAYINGS OF CHRIST

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon.

—Luke 16, 13.

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

—John 11, 25-26.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

—John 12, 32.

The Kingdom of God is within you.

—Luke 17, 21.

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

—Matthew 21, 22.

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The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

—Mark 2, 27.

What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

—Mark 8, 36

CHRIST'S PREACHING

CHRIST'S PREACHING

Great multitudes came together to hear.

—Luke 5, 15.

The eyes of all them that were in the synagog were fastened on him.

—Luke 4, 20.

All wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

—Luke 4, 22.

They were astonished at his doctrine.

—Luke 4, 32.

His word was with power.

—Luke 4, 32.

The fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

—Luke 4, 37.

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He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

—Luke 4, 44.

The people pressed upon him to hear the word of God.

—Luke 5, 1.

The whole multitude sought to touch him.

—Luke 6, 19.

And he taught in their synagogues.

—Luke 4, 15.

There were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people.

—Luke 12, 1.

He turned and rebuked them.

—Luke 9, 55.

He went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.

—Luke 8, 1.

CHRIST'S PREACHING

When he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.

—John 2, 15.

A great multitude followed him.

—John 6, 2.

The multitudes that went before, and followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

—Matthew 21, 9.

And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

—Matthew 21, 10.

Great multitudes followed him.

—Matthew 19, 2.

CHRIST: THE MASTER SPEAKER

He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

—Matthew 15, 35.

There followed him great multitudes of people.

—Matthew 4, 25.

Jesus saw great multitudes about him.

—Matthew 8, 18.

The whole city came out to meet Jesus.

Matthew 8, 34.

The multitudes marvelled.

—Matthew 9, 33.

When he saw the multitudes.

—Matthew 9, 36.

Great multitudes were gathered unto him.

—Matthew 13, 2.

CHRIST'S PREACHING

Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the Sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them.

—Matthew 15, 29-30.

Many were gathered together, inso-much that there was no room to receive them.

—Mark 2, 2.

There were gathered unto him a great multitude.

—Mark 4, 1.

A great multitude from Galilee followed him.

—Mark 3, 7.

There were gathered together an in-

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numerable multitude of people, inso-much that they trode one upon another.

—Luke 12, 1.

As the people prest upon him to hear the word of God.

—Luke 5, 1.

The multitude being very great.

—Mark 8, 1.

When he had looked round about on them with anger.

—Mark 3, 5.

Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

—Matthew 11, 20.

Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and

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the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

—Matthew 21, 12-13.

And the multitudes sat about him.

—Mark 3, 32.

And he looked round about on them which sat about him.

—Mark 3, 34.

He sighed deeply in his spirit.

—Mark 8, 12.

He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the Scribes.

—Mark 1, 22.

All the city was gathered together at the door.

—Mark 1, 33.

Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand.

—Mark 1, 41.

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Straightway many were gathered together.

—Mark 2, 2.

A great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

—Mark 3, 8.

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

—Matthew 9, 35.

JESUS AS AN ORATOR

JESUS AS AN ORATOR*

By JAMES B. CLAYTON, D.D.

Jesus is entitled to the distinction of being the world's foremost orator. To his success as a religious teacher he added the triumphs of the popular speaker; and that his oratory appealed strongly to the masses and was in some respects unique is indicated by many statements in the gospel narratives regarding his audiences and his popularity. The "innumerable multitude" "pressed upon him," "thronged him," and "trode upon one another" when they "were gathered thick" to hear him. We are not left in doubt as to the reception accorded him. "The common people heard him gladly,"

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“wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,” “were astonished at his doctrine,” and shared the opinion at least once expressed by His enemies, “never man spake like this man.” While each of these statements has an individual value, they all unite in conveying the general impression that his oratory was not only unusual, but at times even sensational, invariably arousing both the bitter hostility of his foes and the enthusiastic commendation of his friends.

The utterances of Jesus may be grouped in three classes: His table talk, conversations, and public addresses.

Some of the most suggestive deliverances of Jesus were made as he ate with his disciples, friends, or beneficiaries. Among such utterances were his revolutionary remarks upon the forgiveness of sins, made in connection

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with the incident of the woman of the city breaking her alabaster box in his honor as he sat at the table of Simon the Pharisee; his parting words to his disciples before his crucifixion, spoken as they kept the passover feast in the upper room; and his final injunction to the same body of men to whom "he appeared as they sat at meat," and whom he commissioned to go into all the world and preach his gospel.

His conversation with the woman at Jacob's well on the spirituality of religion; his appeal to the rich young ruler to make God and not gold the supreme quest of life; his memorable interview with Nicodemus on the higher life of the soul and his greeting to Simon Peter by the Galilean Lake, will forever remain models of wise and affectionate counsels on the subject of personal religion.

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Of his many public addresses, such as the Sermon on the Mount and the sermon in the synagog of Nazareth, we know, even from the brief notes in the gospels, that they were original in content, striking in form, and surprizing in their penetrating appeal. He never left his hearers indifferent, but always invoked strong feeling and emphatic comment. He was too personal to be ignored and too impressive to be forgotten. While the rabbis were jealous of his popularity, his hold on the masses remained unshaken; and when the rulers plotted his overthrow, they resorted to trickery, making no attempt to take him openly "for fear of the people," to whom his personality, works, and addresses had endeared him.

Any discussion of the oratory of Jesus must take into account his opportunity, equipment, and message.

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I. HIS OPPORTUNITY. The political, social, and religious conditions of his times presented a golden opportunity for the man of the hour to make himself deeply and permanently felt. In addition to possessing an extraordinary mental and spiritual endowment, Jesus was a close student of his times, and the reach of his mind carried him far beyond Judea and Rome, embracing, indeed, all mankind. His development was normal and gradual. Luke says that he "grew in grace and in wisdom." The eighteen years of obscurity in the carpenter-shop of quiet Nazareth developed his mind and gave him the necessary opportunity for the careful formulation of his message into a compact system so that its presentation should be not only adequate to his own turbulent period, but to be suitable to men in all ages and conditions of life.

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Politically his people were divided into many sects and parties, and were weary, not only of Roman despotism, but of their own incessant strifes. The three hundred years preceding his advent had been filled with popular uprisings and the coming of many messiahs. Cæsarism had all but crushed the nation, tho some hope remained, and the longed-for "Prince of the House of David," if he came, and possessed initiative and administrative genius, would be able to enlist the multitude under his banner.

Politically, conditions favored Jesus; and socially such a man was needed. The spirit of caste completely permeated the national life; those at the top were unwilling to assist or to cooperate with those at the bottom of the social scale; and pride of family, station, and purse, together with a self-righteous-

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ness which has probably never been equaled in the history of religion, made a unified society impossible unless a social revolution should intervene.

Religiously, the times favored a radical reformer. Worship had degenerated into formalism, and righteousness into paying tithes and saying prayers, the religious leaders being content, if the tithes were paid, to regard saying prayers as a work of supererogation. John the Baptist having preceded Jesus with his ministry of repentance, had opened the way for the second and greater preacher of a positive and constructive religion. Both of these ministries were widely different from any of the preceding Messianic movements, and they united in the idea of the immediate establishment of the kingdom of God among men through the regeneration of the individual.

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The sum total of conditions, political, social, and religious, favored the advent and supremacy of a great popular orator, who, instead of being a caustic ascetic like John, should mingle with the people; and this social condition Jesus so far fulfilled that he was assailed as "glutton and winebibber." His custom of regularly attending the weekly services in the Nazareth synagog during the eighteen years prior to his entrance upon public life, had thoroughly familiarized his mind with the ideas, hopes, and needs of his people. One of the first of his recorded addresses, that in Nazareth, was unsettling to his audience and resulted in as trying an experience as could befall a popular speaker. At first the people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth"; but when, in that same brief

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address, he appealed to their history to prove his position that God could not be confined to Judaism, the meeting broke up in an uproar, and ended in an attempt, the first of many, to destroy him. But his opportunity had come; how should it be utilized? Should he conciliate narrow Jewish prejudices, or seize upon the occasion to inaugurate a propaganda for universal brotherhood?

II. HIS EQUIPMENT. The equipment of Jesus as an orator was never excelled. His utterances in public were dignified, and often sober to the verge of gloom; but he possessed a highly nervous temperament in an even more notable degree than Whitefield, whose impassioned declamation often produced bleeding at the nose and mouth; but, while he was a man of great range and depth of emotion, he was not one of

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that class, now happily almost extinct, a "crying preacher." He occasionally wept, often "sighed deeply in his spirit," and in the garden his mental agony was so great that he sweat blood. These indications point to a supernormal sensibility through the multitude's many appeals to which he became "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

His supernatural sensibility was regulated by an inflexible will. Tho he was "meek and lowly of heart," yet had he an unwavering purpose and the executive power of subordinating all things to it. No stress or strain weakened either his convictions or his will, which he regarded as being identical with God's will. He thought and spoke in the imperative mood: "I must" and "thou must" often fell from his lips. If the accidents of privation, temporary

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unpopularity, or the weakness of the flesh at times made conformity with his purpose difficult and perilous, he never faltered, but "set his face like a flint" in treading the path which he knew must end on Calvary. Neither suffering nor betrayal, hardship, nor the cross, altered his plans or paralyzed his faculties. He knew neither fear nor vacillation.

Whether Jesus was above or below the average statue is a subject of contradictory traditions, but his presence must have been dignified and even majestic, His general appearance being a fit expression of the kingly soul within, and especially noticeable in one of his humble origin and rank in society. He resorted to none of the cheap clap-trap of the professional agitator nor to any of the accessories of stagecraft for producing an effect upon his audience,

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nor did he need to resort to such petty artifices for gaining the public ear. He spoke as one who loved God and men, so that it is not strange that "the common people heard him gladly," "came running together," "hung upon his words," and withal were "amazed" at the self-assertion with which He spoke.

His presence also must have been magnetic, as shown by the fact that women and children trusted him, and that when he address such a man as Simon Peter with such simple words as "lovest thou me," and Matthew the tax-collector with the terse utterance, "follow me," the results were disproportionate to the language employed, and clearly prove that there must have been in his manner and tone an almost irresistible kindness. In addition to such effects there were others which

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indicate that Jesus occasionally excited alarm, and, indeed, terror, by the expression of his countenance. As he spoke of his death soon to occur in Jerusalem, his disciples were afraid of him; and in the garden of Gethsemane he exercised that strange power, more than once resorted to by John Wesley, of quelling a mob by a mere look. There was that in his face that charmed the needy into trust; but there was also that which forbade undue familiarity, inspired respect, and even produced fear.

Of his movements while engaged in public discourse, we know but little. "He lifted up his eyes," and "stretched forth his hand" are about the only things said of his gesture or action; but fully taking into account the fact that he had complete control of himself at all times, and so was usually calm in

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delivery, so emotional a man must at times have been very energetic in his discourse and assumed postures or indulged in movements that fittingly accompanied his speech. His conduct and his silence in dealing with the woman brought to him to be condemned was dramatic in the extreme, and far more effective than words alone could have been in such circumstances.

Jesus frequently, and for many months, spoke in the open air, and therefore certainly possessed a voice of great volume and compass, else he could not have endured the strain incident to such efforts. No small part of Spurgeon's popularity was due to his wonderful voice, which ranged from the highest tenor to the lowest bass, and was so penetrating that its whisper could be heard by thousands. So there must have been a charm in the voice

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of Jesus as well as great power. One can not imagine that it was monotonous or harsh. The transforming power of his gracious invitations and friendly appeals must have been considerably augmented by the tender tones in which they were spoken. When he spoke peace filled the heart of the abandoned and outcast; as he pronounced absolution, the midnight shadows of sin disappeared before his smile of welcoming love for the sinner, and morning breathed in the stifling souls of profligates; when he whispered Simon wept and John sobbed; and when he thundered, Lazarus came back from farthest shores and the waters lay down at the feet of the Lord.

The mind of Jesus was equal to his opportunity and the demands imposed upon him by his unique position. This is proven by the quality, reach, and ap-

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propriateness of his sayings. His mind was comprehensive. The most superficial examination of the thought of Jesus shows that he grappled mightily with actual conditions rather than spent his strength on abstract theories. His parabolic form of teaching was peculiarly adapted to his hearers' mental qualifications, and to the purposes of popular oratory. At his death he had left unsaid many things which he desired his disciples to know but which they were then unable to bear; yet even allowing for such necessary restriction upon his teaching, he said enough to prove that his knowledge of the human heart was marvelously complete and that his mind had compassed the heights of truth, the depths of misery, and the breadths of love.

His mind was also clear as crystal. There were no shadows clouding his

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vision; no uncertainties, mental reservations, verbal quibbling, or rhetorical evasions are to be found in his recorded addresses. The topics of his discourse stand out as clear as the parts of a tree in the morning sun. He saw nothing "through a glass darkly," but beheld every truth "face to face," and knew it as a man knows the face of one who loves him best.

His mind was quick in its operations: memory never straggled, reason never limped, and perception never grew blind. He grasped situations immediately, and intuitively knew the wisdom of silence or of speech. He had the skilled orator's ability to perceive and the tact to take advantage of every passing thought in the minds of his hearers, and fittingly to use every occurrence coming under his observation as he spoke. He was more gifted in

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satire than Juvenal and wittier than Pope. There can be no keener insight into the character of Herod the Great than Jesus displayed in his short utterance concerning him, "Go ye and tell that fox," nor could there be any more grotesquely ludicrous characterization of the hypocritical element among the Pharisees than his words, "Ye blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." With these two instances of his wit may be mentioned his exaggerative utterance to self-appointed critics of human frailty, "first cast out the log from thine own eyes, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull the splinter out of thy brother's eye." One may almost hear the ripple of mirth, indeed if not the shout of laughter, which followed such apt words; and these three instances prove that Jesus had a keen sense of humor

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and did not hesitate to employ it in even the most solemn discourse.

The mind of Jesus was full of truth and instantaneous in action, so that no emergency found him unprepared to deal with it adequately and finally; and this mentality, together with his sensibility, presence, and voice, qualified him for mastery of great assemblages.

III. HIS MESSAGE. The basis of the message of Jesus to his own people and to all peoples, was the preciousness of the soul. He never sought to prove its existence any more than he sought to prove the existence of God or of immortality. He assumed these things to be verities. God as every man's Father and immortality as every man's proper hope, furnished the beginning and the ending of his estimate of a soul's worth: it was the "pearl of great price," worth not only more "than

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many sparrows," but more than all the world. Of the originality of his other and subordinate teachings, nothing need here be said; but in the appraisal of the soul's true values, Jesus was a pioneer; and this revolutionary view of human worth gave his addresses and conversations the charms of newness and breadth of view. The boldness, persistency, and skill with which he presented his theme demonstrated his capacity for popular oratory and for religious leadership.

Jesus, "best lover of every human soul," spoke not as the ascetic who scorns the follies of men and despises their feebleness, misanthropic denunciation never once taking the place of persuasive instruction. His defense of religion compelled him to denounce hypocrisy, but even this was done with great sorrow of heart and was immedi-

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ately followed by his pathetic lamentation over Jerusalem. He spoke as the compassionate friend of sinners and the elder brother of saints. He exhibited in his dealings with "the lower classes" the same considerate courtesy that he displayed when in the company of those in the higher walks of life; and this revolutionary democracy of spirit raised Jesus to the highest rank among teachers, statesmen, and orators, His carpenter-shop to the sanctity of a shrine, and lowly Nazareth to a higher rank than that of cultured Athens. Jesus loved men regardless of the so-called accidents of birth and breeding, because they were children of God whose will he delighted to do and whose love he rejoiced to reveal. The sincerity and sympathy of his love was never brought into question, and there was no disparity between his convic-

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tions and utterances, or contradictions between his precepts and practise.

His diction was in keeping with the substance and spirit of his message. It was simple. His aim was to lift men at once out of their lethargy of mind and littleness of thought. He sought to stir all their powers of intellect, conscience, affection, emotion, and will into healthy action, to interest men and make them hopeful. When anecdote would best accomplish this end, he used that form of address rather than abstract discussion. He was never fearful of lowering his dignity as an orator, his position as a teacher, or his prestige as a public man, by speaking so simply that even children could understand what he meant. Indeed, he occasionally went so far as to use proverbs more or less repulsive to fastidious ears, in order to vitalize his message, such

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things being said for the benefit of those who heard, understood, and needed them rather than for professors of rhetoric and homiletics.

His diction was direct. He never indulged in rhetorical circumlocution. He directed all his words to the one purpose of immediately reaching the conscience and will. There was the sharpness of the lightning's revealing flash in everything he said. This is especially noticeable in some of his interrogatories, such as the sweeping appeal, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

His diction was also dramatic. He was not an actor using artificial situations, carefully rehearsed, for the purpose of creating a sensation, either to enhance his reputation or to draw a crowd; but the grim tragedies of life,

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death, and the judgment thrilled his heart so that he could not if he would have avoided dramatic presentations of truth. The tragedy of the rich fool, the story of the lost son, and the picture of the last judgment, would alone have stamped Jesus as a great master of the drama. He used the dramatic element of public address in the hope of averting the greatest of all tragedies, the loss of the soul.

His diction was poetic. He loved the birds in their flight and nesting, and the lilies in their blooming; and he gave to his address the song of the one and the fragrance and color of the other. He possessed both the orator's and the poet's imagination, and his chaste imagery can not be surpassed for its beauty and appropriateness. He wanted men to see the beauty of truth as well as to experience its power;

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and as for himself, he could find God in the sparrow's nest and discover the providence of God in the fall of a hair. If God cared for birds and flowers, and sent the wind, the rain, and the lightning, would He not surely care for the priceless souls of His children?

Finally, his diction was persuasive. This is the final test of eloquence and the fairest measure of an orator's powers. None realized better than Jesus that men can not be driven like yoked oxen into proper paths, that they must be persuaded and lead if they go at all. So, while instructing men in the nature of that kingdom which offers to man not meat nor drink, pomp nor power, but joy, peace, and righteousness, he used every legitimate appeal to fear and hope, reason and conscience, emotion and will, and

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his perorations usually took the form of persuasive exhortations, such as "come unto me," "follow me," "take up thy cross," and "what wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" He had the orator's enthusiasm, but he was not content with doing less than kindling the shekinah glory of obedience within the soul.

Thus in opportunity, equipment, and message, Jesus was preeminently fitted to make among the world's masters of eloquence the supreme efforts of persuasive discourse. The results of his ministry, a ministry of education through public address rather than through literature, were, first, the establishment of a democratic brotherhood which has become world-wide, surviving all the vicissitudes of national movements; second, a religion whose name is synonymous with the

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highest prevailing type of civilization; third, a body of literature of which he is the central theme and which his followers regard as inspired; and last, a personal influence outlasting his physical presence among men, and which lifts life to its highest levels. That his hold on men, whether as individuals or in the multitude, was so great and remains so, apart from his message and the manner of its presentation, is to be ascribed to an entire absence of self-seeking, especially of that petty selfishness which feeds its vanity upon popular applause.

THE SUBSTANCE OF
CHRIST'S TEACHING

THE SUBSTANCE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING *

BY F. W. FARRAR

"I am the Way, The Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—JOHN xiv., 6.

"Regnum cælorum quo emitur? Paupertate, regnum; dolore gaudium; labore, requies; vilitate, gloria; morte, vita."—AUGUSTINE, De Serm. in Morte.

The heart of man—which in its hardness and pride is so naturally prepense to all that is worldly—has shown, everywhere and always, a tendency to corrupt the very elements of spiritual religion. Without incessant watchfulness, and unless God sends to age after age His Prophets and Saints—whose usual reward has been the hate, slander, and persecution of their fellow men—the tendency of all re-

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ligions has been to sink into formal religiosity. Men think it sufficient to draw nigh unto God with their mouths, and honor Him with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him; and they worship Him in vain because, with innate hypocrisy, they substitute for His requirements the commandments of men.

The one remedy for erring generations and perverted priesthoods, if they have left in them the faintest elements of sincerity, is to go back from the ever-accumulating masses of false traditions to the teaching of him whom they profess to worship as their Lord and their God. Much that to this day is taught and paraded as the doctrine of "the church" is in direct and flagrant antagonism to the teaching and example of the Son of God and of his immediate Apostles.

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Now, as far as the outward aspect of Judaism was concerned, there were in Christ's days but two prominent "schools" of religion, namely, those of the Priests and of the Legalists.

Christ entered into no relations with the Priests. He said nothing in commendation of them, or approval of their ideals, or acceptance of their religious views. They were absorbed in selfish worldliness and a ritualism which their insincerity had emptied of its original subordinate significance. The whole body of Priests were Sadducees who had become unspiritual skeptics and worshipers of mammon. Jesus thought nothing of their pretensions, or of their system. Apart from an allusion to the High Priest Abiathar, who rightly broke the law by giving the shew-bread to David in his hunger, he scarcely mentions priests

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at all. In one parable he described the cold-hearted and supercilious formalist who on the way to perform his functions passed with heartless indifference by the wounded wayfarer; and he told lepers, whom he had already cleansed by his word, to get from the priests the ordinary legal certificate that their leprosy was healed. Otherwise he has nothing to say either *to* them or *of* them, because they had no connection with the essential truths which he came to reveal. They were not teachers at all; they had sunk into mere functionaries who contributed nothing to spiritual religion, or even to elementary morality.

The more numerous and predominant party was that of the Pharisees. Of them we have already spoken, and shall have to speak again later on. All that need here be said is that

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Christ rejected Pharisaism so utterly that, whereas to all others his words were full of merciful tenderness, he was compelled again and again to denounce in burning utterances—which have been shown to be necessary in each successive generation—the deep-rooted hypocrisies of these haughty and pretentious formalists.

What Christ with unvarying consistency taught, both by his words and his example, was inward reality, not outward conformities. His religious practises were marked by undeviating simplicity. He taught that the kingdom of God is within us, and that it consists not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in believing. He taught that the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but holiness, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He taught that it is not

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the food which goeth into a man which defiles him, but the evil thoughts which come out of him. Thus, by one word, "He made all meats clean." He would have said with Jeremiah, "Thus said the Lord of Hosts, Add your burned offerings unto your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day when I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burned-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey My Voice."

Again, the Pharisees delighted in outward ablutions—hand-washings and the washing of cups and platters and brazen vessels and tables. For such practises Christ had no word of recognition, and many words of disparagement. The whole of what he had to reveal bore on the essence of heart-

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reality and spiritual pureness. We shall see hereafter some of the minute and tortuous regulations on which the Pharisees insisted in the matter of fasts and ablutions. Christ practised no formal fast, and discouraged his disciples from doing so; he despised the hand-washings and ablutions of cups and platters which had nothing to do with cleanliness, but only with religious formalism. For those who desire to learn of him, religion will be the love of God shown in love to man, and rites and ceremonies will sink into the most infinitesimal proportions. There is no true piety, except such as consists in the bond of union between God and man—that direct and immediate relation of the personal creature to the personal Creator by which all true life can alone be determined.

Without heart-sincerity, and recti-

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tude of life, all forms, however ancient, are worthless. It is dangerous to elaborate and magnify the outward ceremonies of worship when they tend (as they too often do) to breed self-deceit, supercilious arrogance, and opinionated lawlessness. It is of no use to be free from outward crimes if the heart be unclean; it is of no use to abstain from murder if the thoughts be full of hatred, and the words full of rage and slander; it is of no use even to do good works if they are only done to obtain the applause or approval of men. Christ evidently regards the Levitic law, whatever may have been its date and origin, as given to the Israelites because of the hardness of their hearts, and as consisting intrinsically in "weak and beggarly rudiments," fitted only to train the disobedient child-

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hood of the race. He came to abrogate it all. "It hath been said to them of old time—but I say unto you." The essential conception of holiness from henceforth was to be faith and love toward God and the exhibition of that faith and love in constant service to our brethren who are in the world. And the chief means of attaining to this height was prayer—not formal prayers, verbose, stereotyped, wearisome, and interminable, abounding in vain repetitions and artificial phrases; not prayers accompanied, like those of Dervishes and Stylites, with endless crossings, prostrations, and genuflexions—but brief prayers of humble, simple, and trustful earnestness.

All this teaching had become most necessary. The Jews had abandoned the idolatry of false gods during the seventy years of disastrous exile; but

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almost from the days of their restoration they began to fall into a new idolatry—the worship of the symbol and the letter. While they profest to deify the Law, they emptied it of all its significance, and with cunning casuistry managed to evade its most searching requirements. The result was a mixture of arrogant tyranny and spiritual uselessness—it was that common form of religionism which may be defined as “self-complacency flavored by a comprehensive uncharitableness.” Religious attitudinizing ended in a hypocritic life; a terrible obliquity of moral precepts and conduct; a deplorable confusion of holiness with Levitic purity, and of sin with ceremonial defilements; a futile attempt to extort Divine favor by a mass of observances while it was disgracefully indifferent to inward holi-

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ness. If any regard this view of Pharisaism as too severe, let me remind them that the Lord of Love characterized its votaries as "fools and blind"; as "the offspring of vipers"; devouring widows' houses, and for a pretense making long prayers; as washing the outside of the cup and of the platter, while within they were full of extortion and uncleanness.

The Sermon on the Mount was the promulgation of the laws of Christ's new kingdom. Conceive what the Sermon on the Mount would have been if it had been delivered by Caiaphus the Priest, or Simon the Pharisee, or any of their modern representatives! Would it not have been full of priestly usurpations, and petty orthodoxies, and the small proprieties of the infinitely little? Would it not have been deplorably empty of moral manliness

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and spiritual freedom? Christ touched on none of these things. Apart from two sacraments, accompanied by rites of the most elementary simplicity, He did not lay down one liturgical ordinance, or ceremonial injunction, or priestly tradition, or Pharisaic observance. No, but he pronounced beatitudes on the meek and the loving, and precepts of self-denial, and inculcations of tenderness and sympathy. So broad, so simple, so free, so eternal and natural, are the essentials of real saintliness; so universal are the sole requirements of him who said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." To wash the hands in innocence, and so to come to God's altar—that is sainthood. To have the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, void of offense toward God and toward man

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—that is sainthood. To behold the face of our brother in love; to be pure, peaceable, gentle; to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance —*that* is the only sainthood of which Christ set the example, which Christ approves, which Christ will reward for ever.

CHRIST—THE QUESTION OF
THE CENTURIES

CHRIST—THE QUESTION OF THE CENTURIES

BY ROBERT S. MACARTHUR

"What think ye of Christ?"—MATT. xxii., 42.

The ideal man has not yet been discovered. Humboldt, who traveled far, saw much and felt more, recorded in his diary this sentence, "The finest fruit earth holds up to its maker is a man." It is here implied that this finest fruit is the ideal man. But Humboldt did not affirm that he had ever found this man. The ideal man has not yet been discovered among those who were mere men. No one of our noblest men was a spotless sun; no one reached sinless perfection. From all our loftiest specimens of

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manhood I turn dissatisfied to Jesus Christ, and in Him I find the ideal becomes actual, the dream real, and the hope fruition. What Mount Tabor is, rising abruptly in its unique symmetry and beauty from the northeastern arm of the plain of Esdraelon, that Jesus Christ is, rising in insulated grandeur and spotless perfection above the plain reached by the noblest men of all centuries.

What Mount Blanc as the king of the Alps is, lifting its crystal domes and towers 15,781 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea, compared with the other snow-clad and cloud-kissed mountains of the Alps, that Jesus Christ is compared with the loftiest men who have risen as mountain heights above their fellows through all the ages. What the Himalaya range, the most elevated and stu-

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pendous mountain system on the globe, sweeping across historic lands as far as from New York to Chicago and back to New York, and rising so high that the superb Matterhorn, if lifted bodily and placed upon the Jungfrau, would not reach the glittering Himalaya heights, that and more Jesus Christ is to the long line of men who have risen highest in mortal grandeur in the history of the human race. Jesus Christ is the pearl and crown of humanity; he is the loftiest specimen of manhood the race has produced; he is the fullest manifestation of divinity God has given the world; he is the effulgence of God's glory, and the very image of his substance. He rises in unapproachable glory, not only above men, but also above saints and seraphs, and above angels and archangels. Gazing upon him, we can exclaim with

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inexpressible enthusiasm and unutterable ecstasy, "*Ecce Homo!*" and with the same breadth and with equal truth we can also reverently exclaim, "*Ecce Deus!*"

The setting of this text is instructively suggestive. For some time in his discussion with the Pharisees, our Lord had been acting on the defensive. Both Sadducees and Pharisees had been asking him questions. His answers put the Sadducees to silence, and their confusion greatly gratified the Pharisees. It is now their turn to experience similar confusion from the celerity and dexterity of his replies. Never was there so skilful a debater as Jesus Christ. He was masterful in his clarity of thought, simplicity of speech, and purity of motive.

In the case before us, he passes from the defensive to the offensive,

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and he convicts Scribes, and Pharisees, of entertaining false views of the Messiah. They had disputed his claims as a spiritual Messiah, and he now shows the irreconcilable contradiction between their views of him as a mere worldly Messiah, and the teaching of their own prophetic Scriptures. They were silenced and even stunned by his rapid, aggressive, and unanswerable attack. We are significantly told that “no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

It must, doubtless, be admitted that there are men in every community who have no definite convictions regarding Jesus Christ. It seems almost incredible that in a community of culture and Christianity men and women should be found who have not reached

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definite conclusions regarding the person and character of Christ. I put then the question with the utmost directness, "What think ye of Christ?" This is the broadest, deepest, and loftiest question ever put to the human race. This is the question of all the ages. This question virtually engaged the thought of Abraham; it evoked a response from Moses; and it stirred the deepest emotions and loftiest praise of David, as he swept his lyre and sang his immortal songs. . . .

In this congregation there are no hearers unwilling to admit that Jesus Christ is at least a great historic character. They frankly admit that he was born at Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth, and crucified at Jerusalem. They are entirely correct in the outward features of his earthly career, but they have comparatively little con-

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ception of the spiritual significance of his wonderful life and his vicarious death.

They think of the historical elements of his wonderful life as they would think of those of Buddha, Zoroaster, or Mohammed. Their conception of his earthly life has no power over the development of their own lives, except as a mere character of history. They fail to see that his was a unique life, and that it was lived on earth by him, that it might be lived in some measure over again on earth by us. They fail to see that he became the son of man, that we might become the sons of God. They do not learn that he revealed the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man that we should sweetly experience the one and constantly illustrate the other. The historic Christ has no more power over the practical lives

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of some than the traditional heroes of classic legend. Virtually, for them there is no Christ or God. Practically, for them there is no historic Christ. Until the historic Christ is translated into a personal Savior and Master, controlling our acts, our words, and our thoughts by his matchless example, his unique personality, and his spiritual purity, there is for us no historic Christ worthy the name.

There are those who think of the Christ as a dreamy, sentimental, and poetic character. They are charmed by the commendable characteristics of his remarkable life. They refer to him in terms of soothing speech and of dreamy affection. There is an element of poesy in all their conceptions of the divine-human Christ. They think of him in language which the robust Chalmers called, in his lofty scorn,

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“nursery endearments.” They are ready to adopt the language of the renowned French theologian, eminent Orientalist, and brilliant rhetorician, Renan, when he speaks of the Christ of God as the “sweet Galilean.” Such epithets must be utterly unwelcome to Christ. If he be not more than man, then he is less than man. If he be not worthy of our loftiest devotion, he is certainly worthy of our severest reprehension. In a word, if he be not God, he is not a good man.

Carlyle described materialism as a “gospel of dirt”; we might fittingly describe this sweet and silly sentimentalism as a “gospel of gush.” Only as we bow down at Christ’s feet, and worship him as the divine-human Man, can we give him the honor which he merits and demands. Then we can employ and sanctify the loftiest poetry

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in chanting his praise, the noblest art in limning his person, and the profoundest logic in urging his claims upon men as the divine-human Savior. There are many who are willing to admit and who earnestly affirm that Jesus Christ is the ideal man of the human race. They are ready to declare that it was a glorious thing that man was originally made like God, and that it was a still more condescending thing that God was made like man. The Christ was indeed the ideal man of the human race. He was the great exemplar, the perfect model, the sublime original to be imitated by all true men and women. In him, and in him only, the plant of humanity blossomed and bloomed into a perfect flower.

But how can we account for the perfection of his humanity, if we deny the reality of his divinity? We ought,

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as students of literature and life, to account for Jesus the Christ. We strive to account for Socrates and Plato, for David and Isaiah, for Paul and Luther, for Washington and Gladstone, for Lincoln and McKinley. Are we not under the strongest possible obligations to account for Jesus Christ? Men say that Jesus Christ was good, but that he was not God. Out of their own mouths these men convict themselves of inconsistency in their locutions and illogicality in their reasonings. If Jesus Christ be not God, he is not good. He is either an unpardonable egotist, or a hopeless lunatic, or he is the Christ of God, and God over all, blessed forever more. He claimed to be God, and if his claim be not true, how can he be good? The stream of his life flowed through the human race on a higher level, and rose

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to a vastly higher point than any other stream known to human history or divine revelation. How shall we account for the height to which that stream rose? Water can never rise higher than its source. If that source were simply human, how can we account for the superhuman height which it reached? If we admit the account given in the gospels of his virgin birth and divine origin, all his life is easily explicable.

But if we deny his unique origin, we can not logically account for his unique life. A life begun as was never another life, we might expect to see continue as no other life continued. A naturally skeptical man finds it easier to admit the account of Christ's remarkable birth than to attempt to explain his remarkable life if he deny the remarkable birth. The uniqueness

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of his birth we would naturally expect to eventuate in the uniqueness of his life. His life can not be explained on any principle of heredity. We readily admit the royal element in his blood, altho the fortunes of his family had fallen before his birth; but no law of heredity will account for the physical attractiveness, the mental superiority, and the moral purity of Jesus, the Christ. Neither will environment account for his marvelous career and character. What was there in the peasant conditions of his family life to produce the uniqueness of his manhood? Neither will education account for the Christ. He was never in school, in the technical sense of that term, altho he doubtless studied in the village synagog; and yet he rose above all the limitations, traditions, and bigotries by which he was surrounded.

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It is doubtful if he ever sat at the feet of the greatest rabbis of the time. It is certain that he never studied at the feet of the philosophers of Greece and Rome, nor of the dreamy Orient. He never traveled, except possibly barely across the confines of Palestine, a country about the size of the State of New Hampshire. How came he to emancipate himself from the sectarianism and sectionalism of his country and century? How came he to be the contemporary of all the ages? How came he to utter in the Sermon on the Mount truths which socially and religiously the foremost thinkers of to-day can barely understand, and dare not fully apply to the solution of the problems of the hour? No mere human thinker has ever approached the Sermon on the Mount. But in pure spirituality of

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thought, our Lord surpassed it in his last address to his disciples. This address bears the ineffaceable marks of his supreme divinity and absolute deity. O ye critics, I ask you as a problem of literature and life to account for Jesus the Christ. I ask no favors for him. It is you that need the favors, if you oppose the Christ. I demand for him simple justice. "What think ye of the Christ?"

Dr. Geikie, in his "Life of Christ," calls attention to the fact that the Jews confess great admiration for the character and words of Jesus; that the Mohammedan world gives him the high title of Messiah; that the myriad-minded Shakespeare paid him lowly reverence, and that men like Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Newton, and Milton set the name of Christ above every other name. He also reminds us that Jean

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Paul Richter, whom his countrymen call "Der Einzige," the unique, tells us that "the life of Christ concerns him who, being the holiest among the mighty, the mightiest among the holy, lifted with his pierced hands empires off their hinges, and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages." Spinoza, the great philosopher, son of Portuguese Jews, disciple of Aben-Ezra and Descartes, calls Christ the symbol of divine wisdom. Schelling and Hegel speak of him as the union of the divine and human. The immortal Goethe, the acknowledged prince of German poets, and one of the most superbly accomplished men of the eighteenth century, says, "I esteem the gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendor of a sublimity, proceeding from the

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person of Jesus Christ, of so divine a kind as only the divine could ever have manifested upon earth."

What thinkest thou of the Christ, O Jean Jacques Rousseau, with all the brilliancy of thy intellect, the singularity of thy character, and the enthusiasm of thy writings? Give place to the witness Rousseau; hear his testimony. Rousseau speaks: "How petty are the books of the philosophers, compared with the gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the work of men? Can he whose life they tell be himself no more than a mere man? . . . Yes, if the death of Socrates be that of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." *What thinkest thou of the Christ, burly, brusque, brave, and heroic Thomas Carlyle, with all thy marvelous reading,*

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thy profound thinking, and thy contempt of cant and love of truth? Carlyle steps forward and speaks: "Jesus of Nazareth, our divine symbol! Higher has the human thought not yet reached." Let us summon Dr. Channing, the cultured and eloquent preacher and writer, the foremost man among American Unitarians in his day. *What thinkest thou, O Channing, of Jesus Christ?* He makes reply: "The character of Jesus Christ is wholly inexplicable on human principles."

What thinkest thou, O Herder, illustrious German thinker, broad scholar, and exquisite genius, of Jesus, the Christ? Superb is his reply: "Jesus Christ is in the noblest and most perfect sense the realized ideal of humanity." *What thinkest thou of the Christ, O Napoleon, mighty son of Mars, striding through the world like*

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a Colossus, darkening the brightness of noon-day with the smoke, and lighting the darkness at midnight with the fires of battle? Hear this man of gigantic intellect, whatever may be said of his moral motives: "I think I understand somewhat of human nature, and I tell you all these (the heroes of antiquity) were men, and I am a man, but not one is like him; Jesus Christ was more than man. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for him." Compared with such witnesses as these, the opponents of Jesus Christ of to-day are pigmies so contemptible in mentality and so questionable in morality as to be ruled out of every

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court of testimony, where intellectual ability and moral worth have weight.

I summon thee, O execrable Judas. Behold him flinging down the thirty pieces of silver before the chief priests and elders. Hear him speak in his agony of soul: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." *I summon thee, O Pontius Pilate,* with thy immortality of shame in the creeds of the ages. The Roman Procurator washes his hands. Strange sight! He speaks: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." He speaks again: "I find no fault in this man." *I summon John, the heroic Baptist.* Hear his testimony: "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." *O loving and divine John, the Evangelist, what thinkest thou of the Christ?* "He is the Vine, the Way, the Truth, the Light, and the Word,

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and the Word was God.” *I summon thee, O matchless Paul.* What is thy testimony? “He is the image of the invisible God. . . . The blessed and only Potentate the King of kings, the Lord of lords.” *I summon thee, Apostle Peter,* once confessor, then denier, but afterward penitent witness and heroic martyr. What is thy testimony? “He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.” *I summon thee, O once doubting but always brave Thomas.* Hear the testimony of this witness as he falls at the Master’s feet and exclaims, “My Lord and my God!”

I summon thee, O John Bunyan, immortal thinker; thy glorious Pilgrim, marching through the ages, telling the story of redeeming love, is thy testimony to the character of thy Lord. *I summon thee O Charles Spurgeon,* and the testimony of all thy volumes,

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of thy glorious life and of thy peerless ministry is that "Jesus Christ is the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely." *I summon thee, O De Wette*, great Biblical critic of Germany: "This only I know, that there is salvation in no other name than in the name of Jesus Christ, the crucified." *I summon thee, O scholarly, cultured MacIntosh*; the attendants are watching thy last moments, they bend over thee to catch thy last whispers: "Jesus love!—Jesus, love!—The same thing." I might summon ten thousand more who, from the Grassmarket in Edinburgh, and from a thousand racks and stakes, went up to glory and to God, and their testimony would be: "None but Jesus, none but Jesus." *I summon thee, Toplady*, and hear thee sing this great hymn, "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me."

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I summon thee, O Tennyson, immortal laureate, thou who hast fought thy doubts and found divine help. Let us hear the result of thy conflicts:

Strong Son of God, immortal love,
Whom we, that have not seen Thy
face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we can not prove.

Thine are these orbs of light and
shade;
Thou madest life in man and brute;
Thou madest death; and lo! Thy
foot
Is on the skull which Thou hast made.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood Thou;
Our wills are ours, we know not
how;
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

I summon thee, O Browning, poet of divine optimism and interpreter of the deeper instincts of the human

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heart, let us hear the conclusion of the philosophic mind:

I say the acknowledgment of God in
Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the world and out
of it,
And hath so far advanced thee to be
wise.

I summon thee, O Gladstone, noblest of statesmen, uncrowned king of the world, thou who didst come in contact with the throbbing life of the world, of politics, letters and religions, what sayest thou concerning humanity's greatest need? "I am asked what a man should chiefly look to in his progress through life as to the power that is to sustain him under trials and enable him manfully to confront his afflictions. I must point to something which, in a well-known hymn is called,

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‘The old, old story,’ and taught with an old, old teaching, which is the best gift ever given to mankind. The older I grow, the more confirmed I am in the belief that Jesus Christ is the only hope of humanity.”

I summon Thyself, O Thou Christ of God, Thou holiest of the holy, Thou who art God of very God. What sayest Thou of Thyself? “Before Abraham was I am.” “I and my Father are one.” “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.”

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BY WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

My Respected Friends:—By the invitation of the committee of arrangements for the Franklin Lectures, I now appear before you to offer some remarks introductory to this course. My principal inducement for doing so is my deep interest in those of my fellow citizens for whom these lectures are principally designed. I understood that they were to be attended chiefly by those who are occupied by manual labor; and, hearing this, I did not feel myself at liberty to decline the service to which I had been invited. I wished by compliance to express my sympathy with this large portion of my race. I wished to express my sense of obligation to those from whose industry

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and skill I derive almost all the comforts of life. I wished still more to express my joy in the efforts they are making for their own improvement, and my firm faith in their success. These motives will give a particular character and bearing to some of my remarks. I shall speak occasionally as among those who live by the labor of their hands. But I shall not speak as one separated from them. I belong rightfully to the great fraternity of working men. Happily in this community we are all bred and born to work; and this honorable mark, set on us all, should bind together the various portions of the community.

In this country the mass of the people are distinguished by possessing means of improvement, or self-culture, possest nowhere else. To incite them to the use of these, is to render them

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the best service they can receive. Accordingly I have chosen for the subject of this address, Self-culture, or the care which every man owes to himself, to the unfolding and perfecting of his nature. My aim will be, to give first the Idea of self-culture, next its Means, and then to consider some objections to the leading views which I am now to lay before you.

WHAT MAKES SELF-CULTURE POSSIBLE

Self-culture is something possible. It is not a dream. It has foundations in our nature. Without this conviction, the speaker will but declaim, and the hearer listen without profit. There are two powers of the human soul which make self-culture possible, the self-searching and the self-forming power. We have first the faculty of turning the mind on itself; of recalling

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its past, and watching its present operations; of learning its various capacities and susceptibilities, what it can do and bear, what it can enjoy and suffer; and of thus learning in general what our nature is, and what it was made for. It is worthy of observation that we are able to discern not only what we already are, but what we may become, to see in ourselves germs and promises of a growth to which no bounds can be set, to dart beyond what we have actually gained to the idea of Perfection as the end of our being.

But self-culture is possible not only because we can enter into and search ourselves. We have a still nobler power, that of acting on, determining and forming ourselves. This is a fearful as well as glorious endowment, for it is the ground of human responsibil-

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ity. We have the power not only of tracing our powers, but of guiding and impelling them; not only of watching our passions, but of controlling them; not only of seeing our faculties grow, but of applying to them means and influences to aid their growth. We can stay or change the current of thought. We can concentrate the intellect on objects which we wish to comprehend. We can fix our eyes on perfection, and make almost everything speed us toward it. This is indeed a noble prerogative of our nature. Possessing this, it matters little what or where we are now, for we can conquer a better lot, and even be happier for starting from the lowest point. Of all the discoveries which men need to make, the most important at the present moment, is that of self-forming power treasured up in them-

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selves. They little suspect its extent, as little as the savage apprehends the energy which the mind is created to exert on the material world. It transcends in importance all our power over outward nature. There is more of divinity in it than in the force which impels the outward universe; and yet how little we comprehend it! How it slumbers in most men unsuspected, unused! This makes self-culture possible, and binds it on us as a solemn duty.

WHAT SELF-CULTURE IS

I. I am to unfold the Idea of self-culture; and this, in its most general form, may be easily seized. To cultivate anything, be it a plant, an animal, a mind, is to make grow. Growth, expansion, is the end. Nothing admits culture but that which has a principle of life, capable of being expanded. He,

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therefore, who does what he can to unfold all his powers and capacities, especially his nobler ones, so as to become a well-proportioned, vigorous, excellent, happy being, practises self-culture.

The Moral Side

First, self-culture is moral, a branch of singular importance. When a man looks into himself, he discovers two distinct orders or kinds of principles, which it behooves him especially to comprehend. He discovers desires, appetites, passions, which terminate in himself, which crave and seek his own interest, gratification, distinction; and he discovers another principle, an antagonist to these, which is Impartial, Disinterested, Universal, enjoining on him a regard to the rights and happiness of other beings, and laying on him

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obligations which must be discharged, cost what they may, or however they may clash with his particular pleasure or gain. No man, however narrowed to his own interest, however hardened by selfishness, can deny that there springs up within him a great idea in opposition to interest, the idea of Duty, that an inward voice calls him more or less distinctly, to revere and exercise Impartial Justice, and Universal Good will.

This disinterested principle in human nature we call sometimes reason, sometimes conscience, sometimes the moral sense or faculty. But be its name what it may, it is a real principle in each of us, and it is the supreme power within us, to be cultivated above all others, for on its culture the right development of all others depends. The passions, indeed, may be stronger than

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the conscience, may lift up a louder voice; but their clamor differs wholly from the tone of command in which the conscience speaks. They are not clothed with its authority, its binding power. In their very triumphs they are rebuked by the moral principle, and often cower before its still, deep, menacing voice. No part of self-knowledge is more important than to discern clearly these two great principles, the self-seeking and the disinterested; and the most important part of self-culture is to depress the former, and to exalt the latter, or to enthrone the sense of duty within us. There are no limits to the growth of this moral force in man if he will cherish it faithfully. There have been men whom no power in the universe could turn from the Right, by whom death in its most dreadful forms had been less dreaded than transgression of

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the inward law of universal justice and love.

The Religious Side

In the next place, self-culture is Religious. When we look into ourselves we discover powers which link us with this outward, visible, finite, ever-changing world. We have sight and other senses to discern, and limbs and various faculties to secure and appropriate the material creation. And we have, too, a power, which can not stop at what we see and handle, at what exists within the bounds of space and time, which seeks for the Infinite, Uncreated Cause, which can not rest till it ascends to the Eternal, All-comprehending Mind. This we call the religious principle, and its grandeur can not be exaggerated by human language; for it marks out a being destined for higher communion

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than with the visible universe. To develop this is eminently to educate ourselves. The true idea of God, unfolded clearly and livingly within us, and moving us to adore and obey him, and to aspire after likeness to him, is the noblest growth in human, and, I may add, in celestial natures. The religious principle, and the moral, are intimately connected, and grow together. The former is, indeed, the perfection and highest manifestation of the latter. They are both disinterested. It is the essence of true religion to recognize and adore in God the attributes of Impartial Justice and Universal Love, and to hear him commanding us in the conscience to become what we adore.

The Intellectual Side

Again. Self-culture is Intellectual. We can not look into ourselves without

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discovering the intellectual principle, the power which thinks, reasons, and judges, the power of seeking and acquiring truth. This, indeed, we are in no danger of overlooking. The intellect being the great instrument by which men compass their wishes, it draws more attention than any of our other powers. When we speak to men of improving themselves the first thought which occurs to them is, that they must cultivate their understanding, and get knowledge and skill. By education men mean almost exclusively intellectual training. For this schools and colleges are instituted, and to this the moral and religious discipline of the young is sacrificed.

Now I reverence, as much as any man, the intellect; but let us never exalt it above the moral principle. With this it is most intimately connected. In

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this its culture is founded and to exalt this is its highest aim. Whoever desires that his intellect may grow up to soundness, to healthy vigor, must begin with moral discipline. Reading and study are not enough to perfect the power of thought. One thing above all is needful, and that is, the Disinterestedness which is the very soul of virtue. To gain truth, which is the great object of the understanding, I must seek it disinterestedly. Here is the first and grand condition of intellectual progress. I must choose to receive the truth no matter how it bears on myself. I must follow it no matter where it leads, what interests it opposes, to what persecution or loss it lays me open, from what party it severs me, or to what party it allies. Without this fairness of mind, which is only another phrase for disinterested love of truth, great native

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powers of understanding are perverted and led astray; genius runs wild; "the light within us becomes darkness."

I have enlarged on this subject because the connection between moral and intellectual culture is often overlooked, and because the former is often sacrificed to the latter. The exaltation of talent, as it is called, above virtue and religion, is the curse of the age. Education is now chiefly a stimulus to learning, and thus men acquire power without the principles which alone make it a good. Talent is worshipped; but, if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a demon than a god.

Intellectual culture consists, not chiefly, as many are apt to think, in accumulating information, tho this is important, but in building up a force of thoughts which may be turned at will on any subjects on which we are

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called to pass judgment. This force is manifested in the concentration of the attention, in accurate, penetrating observation, in reducing complex subjects to their elements, in diving beneath the effect to the cause, in detecting the more subtle differences and resemblances of things, in reading the future in the present, and especially in rising from particular facts to general laws or universal truths. This last exertion of the intellect, its rising to broad views and great principles, constitutes what is called the philosophical mind, and is especially worthy of culture. What it means your own observation must have taught you. You must have taken note of two classes of men, the one always employed on details, on particular facts, and the other using these facts as foundations of higher, wider truths. The latter are

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philosophers. For example, men had for ages seen pieces of wood, stones, metals falling to the ground. Newton seized on these particular facts and rose to the idea that all matter tends, or is attracted, toward all matter, and then defined the law according to which this attraction or force acts at different distances, thus giving us a grand principle, which, we have reason to think, extends to and controls the whole outward creation. One man reads a history and can tell you all its events, and there stops. Another combines these events, brings them under one view, and learns the great causes which are at work on this or another nation, and what are its great tendencies, whether to freedom or despotism, to one or another form of civilization. So, one man talks continually about the particular actions of

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this or another neighbor; while another looks beyond the acts to the inward principle from which they spring, and gathers from them larger views of human nature. In a word, one man sees all things apart and in fragments, while another strives to discover the harmony, connection, unity of all.

To build up that strength of mind which apprehends and cleaves to great universal truths, is the highest intellectual self-culture; and here I wish you to observe how entirely this culture agrees with that of the moral and the religious principles of our nature, of which I have previously spoken.

The Social Side

Again, Self-culture is social, or one of its great offices is to unfold and purify the affections which spring up instinctively in the human breast,

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which bind together husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister; which bind a man to friends and neighbors, to his country, and to the suffering who fall under his eye, wherever they belong. The culture of these is an important part of our work, and it consists in converting them from instincts into principles, from natural into spiritual attachments, in giving them a rational, moral, and holy character. For example, our affection for our children is at first instinctive; and if it continue such, it rises little above the brute's attachment to its young. But when a parent infuses into his natural love for his offspring moral and religious principle, when he comes to regard his child as an intelligent, spiritual, immortal being, and honors him as such, and desires first of all to make him disinterested, noble, a

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worthy child of God and the friend of his race, then the instinct arises into a generous and holy sentiment. It resembles God's paternal love for his spiritual family. A like purity and dignity we must aim to give to all our affections.

The Practical Side

Again. Self-culture is practical, or it proposes, as one of its chief ends, to fit us for action, to make us efficient in whatever we undertake, to train us to firmness of purpose and to fruitfulness of resource in common life, and especially in emergencies, in times of difficulty, danger, and trial. But passing over this and other topics for which I have no time, I shall confine myself to two branches of self-culture which have been almost wholly overlooked in the education of the

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people, and which ought not to be so slighted.

ACQUIRING AN APPRECIATION FOR BEAUTY

In looking at our nature, we discover, among its admirable endowments, the sense of perception of Beauty. We see the germ of this in every human being, and there is no power which admits greater cultivation; and why should it not be cherished in all? It deserves remark that the provision for this principle is infinite in the universe. There is but a very minute portion of the creation which we can turn into food and clothes, or gratification for the body; but the whole creation may be used to minister to the sense of beauty. Beauty is an all-pervading presence. It unfolds in the numberless flowers of the spring. It waves in the branches

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of the trees and the green blades of grass. It haunts the depths of the earth and sea, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and the precious stone. And not only these minute objects, but the ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun, all overflow with beauty. The universe is its temple; and those men, who are alive to it, can not lift their eyes without feeling themselves encompassed with it on every side.

Now this beauty is so precious, the enjoyments it gives are so refined and pure, so congenial with our tenderest and noble feelings, and so akin to worship, that it is painful to think of the multitude of men as living in the midst of it, and living almost as blind to it, as if, instead of this fair earth and glorious sky, they were ten-

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ants of a dungeon. An infinite joy is lost to the world by the want of culture of this spiritual endowment. Suppose that I were to visit a cottage and to see its walls lined with the choicest pictures of Raphael, and every spare nook filled with statues of the most exquisite workmanship, and that I were to learn, that neither man, woman, nor child ever cast an eye at these miracles of art, how should I feel their privation; how should I want to open their eyes, and to help them to comprehend and feel the loveliness and grandeur which in vain courted their notice! But every husbandman is living in sight of the works of a diviner Artist; and how much would his existence be elevated could he see the glory which shines forth in their forms, hues, proportions, and moral expression! I have spoken only of

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the beauty of nature, but how much of this mysterious charm is found in the elegant arts, and especially in literature? The best books have most beauty. The greatest truths are wronged if not linked with beauty, and they win their way most surely and deeply into the soul when arrayed in this their natural and fit attire.

GAINING THE POWER OF EXPRESSION

There is another power, which each man should cultivate according to his ability, but which is very much neglected in the mass of the people, and that is the power of Utterance. A man was not made to shut up his mind in itself; but to give it voice and to exchange it for other minds. Speech is one of our grand distinctions from the brute. Our power over others lies not so much in the amount

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of thought within us, as in the power of bringing it out. A man of more than ordinary intellectual vigor, may, for want of expression, be a cipher without significance in society. And not only does a man influence others, but he greatly aids his own intellect, by giving distinct and forceful utterance to his thoughts. We understand ourselves better, our conceptions grow clearer, by the very effort to make them clear to another. Our social rank, too, depends a good deal on our power of utterance. The principal distinction between what are called gentlemen and the vulgar lies in this, that the latter are awkward in manners, and are especially wanting in propriety, clearness, grace, and force of utterance. A man who can not open his lips without breaking a rule of grammar, without showing in

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his dialect or brogue or uncouth tones his want of cultivation, or without darkening his meaning by a confused, unskilful mode of communication, can not take the place to which, perhaps, his native good sense entitles him. To have intercourse with respectable people, we must speak their language. The power of utterance should be included by all in their plans of self-culture.

SELF-CULTURE THE DUTY OF ALL

The common notion has been that the mass of the people need no other culture than is necessary to fit them for their various trades, and tho this error is passing away, it is far from being exploded. But the ground of a man's culture lies in his nature, not in his calling. His powers are to be unfolded on account of their inher-

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ent dignity, not their outward direction. He is to be educated because he is a man, not because he is to make shoes, nails, or pins. A trade is plainly not the great end of his being, for his mind can not be shut up in it; his force of thought can not be exhausted on it. He has faculties to which it gives no action, and deep wants it can not answer. Poems, and systems of theology and philosophy, which have made some noise in the world, have been wrought at the work-bench and amidst the toils of the field. How often, when the arms are mechanically plying a trade, does the mind, lost in reverie or day-dreams, escape to the ends of the earth! How often does the pious heart of woman mingle the greatest of all thoughts, that of God, with household drudgery!

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Undoubtedly a man is to perfect himself in his trade, for by it he is to earn his bread and to serve the community. But bread or subsistence is not his highest good; for, if it were, his lot would be harder than that of the inferior animals, for whom nature spreads a table and weaves a wardrobe, without a care of their own. Nor was he made chiefly to minister to the wants of the community. A rational, moral being can not, without infinite wrong, be converted into a mere instrument of others' gratification. He is necessarily an end, not a means. A mind, in which are sown the seeds of wisdom, disinterestedness, firmness of purpose, and piety, is worth more than all the outward material interests of a world. It exists for itself, for its own perfection and must not be enslaved to its own or others' animal

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wants. You tell me, that a liberal culture is needed for men who are to fill high stations, but not for such as are doomed to vulgar labor. I answer, that Man is a greater name than President or King.

Truth and goodness are equally precious in whatever sphere they are found. Besides, men of all conditions sustain equally the relations which give birth to the highest virtues and demand the highest powers. The laborer is not a mere laborer. He has close, responsible connections with God and his fellow creatures. He is a son, husband, father, friend, and Christian. He belongs to a home, a country, a church, a race; and is such a man to be cultivated only for a trade? Was he not sent into the world for a greater work? To educate a child perfectly requires profounder thought, greater wisdom,

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than to govern a State; and for this plain reason, that the interests and wants of the latter are more superficial, coarser, and more obvious, than the spiritual capacities, the growth of thought and feeling, and the subtile laws of the mind, which must all be studied and comprehended, before the work of education can be thoroughly performed; and yet to all conditions this greater work on earth is equally committed by God. What plainer proof do we need that a higher culture than has yet been dreamed of is needed by our whole race?

The Methods of Self-Culture

RESOLUTE PURPOSE ESSENTIAL

II. I now proceed to inquire into the Means by which the self-culture just described may be promoted; and, first, the great means of self-culture, that

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which includes all the rest, is to fasten on this culture as our Great End, to determine deliberately and solemnly that we will make the most and the best of the powers which God has given us. Without this resolute purpose the best means are worth little, and with it the poorest become mighty. You may see thousands, with every opportunity of improvement which wealth can gather, with teachers, libraries, and apparatus, bringing nothing to pass, and others, with few helps, doing wonders; and simply because the latter are in earnest and the former are not. A man in earnest finds means, or, if he can not find, creates them. A vigorous purpose makes much out of little, breathes power into weak instruments, disarms difficulties, and even turns them into assistances.

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THE GREAT SOURCES OF WISDOM

Some are discouraged from proposing to themselves improvement, by the false notion that the study of books, which their situation denies them, is the all-important, and only sufficient means. Let us consider, that the grand volumes, of which all our books are transcripts, I mean nature, revelation, the human soul, and human life, are freely unfolded to every eye. The great sources of wisdom are experience and observation; and these are denied to none. To open and fix our eyes upon what passes without and within us, is the most fruitful study. Books are chiefly useful as they help us to interpret what we see and experience. When they absorb men, as they sometimes do, and turn them from observation of nature and life, they generate a learned folly, for which the plain

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sense of the laborer could not be exchanged but at great loss. It deserves attention that the greatest men have been formed without the studies which at present are thought by many most needful to improvement. Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, never heard the name of chemistry, and knew less of the solar system than a boy in our common schools. Not that these sciences are unimportant; but the lesson is, that human improvement never wants the means, where the purpose of it is deep and earnest in the soul.

Not a few persons desire to improve themselves only to get property and to rise in the world; but such do not properly choose improvement, but something outward and foreign to themselves; and so low an impulse can produce only a stunted, partial, uncertain growth. A man, as I have said, is to

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cultivate himself because he is a man. He is to start with the conviction, that there is something greater within him than in the whole material creation, than in all the worlds which press on the eye and ear; and that inward improvements have a worth and dignity in themselves, quite distinct from the power they give over outward things. Undoubtedly a man is to labor to better his condition, but first to better himself. If he know no higher use of his mind than to invent and drudge for his body, his case is desperate as far as culture is concerned.

CONTROLLING THE DESIRES

I proceed to another important means of self-culture, and this is the control of the animal appetites. To raise the moral and intellectual nature, we must put down the animal. Sensuality is the

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abyss in which very many souls are plunged and lost. Among the most prosperous classes, what a vast amount of intellectual life is drowned in luxurious excesses! It is one great curse of wealth that it is used to pamper the senses; and among the poorer classes, tho luxury is wanting, yet a gross feeding often prevails, under which the spirit is whelmed. It is a sad sight to walk through our streets and to see how many countenances bear marks of a lethargy and a brutal coarseness, induced by unrestrained indulgence. Whoever would cultivate the soul must restrain the appetites. I am not an advocate for the doctrine that animal food was not meant for man; but that this is used among us to excess, that as a people we should gain much in cheerfulness, activity, and buoyancy of mind, by less gross and stimulating food, I

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am strongly inclined to believe. Above all, let me urge on those who would bring out and elevate their higher nature, to abstain from the use of spirituous liquors. This bad habit is distinguished from all others by the ravages it makes on the reason, the intellect; and this effect is produced to a mournful extent, even when drunkenness is escaped. Not a few men, called temperate, and who have thought themselves such, have learned, on abstaining from the use of ardent spirits, that for years their minds have been clouded, impaired by moderate drinking, without their suspecting the injury. Multitudes in this city are bereft of half their intellectual energy, by a degree of indulgence which passes for innocent. Of all the foes of the working class, this is the deadliest. Nothing has done more to keep down this class,

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to destroy their self-respect, to rob them of their just influence in the community, to render profitless the means of improvement within their reach, than the use of ardent spirits as a drink. They are called on to withstand this practise, as they regard their honor, and would take their just place in society.

THE IMMEASURABLE VALUE OF BOOKS

I now come to another important measure of self-culture, and this is, intercourse with superior minds. I have insisted on our own activity as essential to our progress; but we were not made to live our advance alone. Society is as needful to us as air or food. It is chiefly through books that we enjoy intercourse with superior minds, and these invaluable means of communication are in the reach of all. In the best

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books great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours. God be thanked for books. They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levelers. They give to all who will faithfully use them the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and greatest of our race. No matter how poor I am, no matter tho the prosperous of my own time will not enter my obscure dwelling, if the sacred writers will enter and take up their abode under my roof, if Milton will cross my threshold to sing to me of Paradise, and Shakespeare to open to me the worlds of imagination and the workings of the human heart, and Franklin to enrich me with his practical wisdom, I shall not pine for want of intellectual companionship, and I

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may become a cultivated man tho excluded from what is called the best society in the place where I live.

To make this means of culture effectual a man must secure good books, such as have been written by right-minded and strong-minded men, real thinkers, who instead of diluting by repetition what others say, have something to say for themselves, and write to give relief to full, earnest souls; and those works must not be skimmed over for amusement, but read with fixt attention and a reverential love of truth. I know how hard it is to some men, especially to those who spend much time in manual labor, to fix attention on books. Let them strive to overcome the difficulty by choosing subjects of deep interest, or by reading in company with those whom they love.

Nothing can supply the place of

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books. They are cheering or soothing companions in solitude, illness, affliction. The wealth of both continents would not compensate for the good they impart. Let every man, if possible, gather some good books under his roof, and obtain access for himself and family to some social library. Almost any luxury should be sacrificed to this.

One of the very interesting features of our times is the multiplication of books, and their distribution through all conditions of society. At a small expense, a man can now possess himself of the most precious treasures of English literature. Books, once confined to a few by their costliness, are now accessible to the multitude; and in this way a change of habits is going on in society, highly favorable to the culture of the people. The diffusion of these silent teachers, books, through

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the whole community, is to work greater effects than artillery, machinery, and legislation. Its peaceful agency is to supersede stormy revolutions. The culture, which it is to spread, while an unspeakable good to the individual, is also to become the stability of nations.

INDIVIDUALITY OF THOUGHT

Another important means of self-culture is to free ourselves from the power of human opinion and example, except as far as this is sanctioned by our own deliberate judgment. We are all prone to keep the level of those we live with, to repeat their words, and dress our minds as well as bodies after their fashion; and hence the spiritless tameness of our characters and lives. Our greatest danger is not from the grossly wicked around us, but from the worldly, unreflecting multitude who are borne

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along as a stream by foreign impulse, and bear us along with them. Even the influence of superior minds may harm us by bowing us to servile acquiescence and damping our spiritual activity. The great use of intercourse with other minds is to stir up our own, to whet our appetite for truth, to carry our thoughts beyond their old tracks. We need connections with great thinkers to make us thinkers, too. One of the chief arts of self-culture is to unite the child-like teachableness, which gratefully welcomes light from every human being who can give it, with manly resistance of opinions however current, of influences however generally revered, which do not approve themselves to our deliberate judgment. You ought, indeed, patiently and conscientiously to strengthen your reason by other men's intelligence, but you must not prostrate it before

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them. Be true to your own highest convictions. Intimations from our own souls of something more perfect than others teach, if faithfully followed, give us a consciousness of spiritual force and progress, never experienced by the vulgar of high life or low life, who march, as they are drilled, to the step of their times.

A man in the common walks of life who has faith in perfection, in the unfolding of the human spirit, as the great purpose of God, possesses more the secret of the universe, perceives more the harmonies or mutual adaptations of the world without and the world within him, is a wiser interpreter of Providence, and reads nobler lessons of duty in the events which pass before him, than the profoundest philosopher who wants this grand central truth. Thus illuminations, inward sug-

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gestions, are not confined to a favored few, but visit all who devote themselves to a generous self-culture.

YOUR WORK AS A WAY TO CULTURE

Another means of self-culture may be found by every man in his Condition or Occupation, be it what it may. Now the man, who, in working, no matter in what way, strives perpetually to fulfil his obligations thoroughly, to do his whole work faithfully, to be honest, not because honestly is the best policy, but for the sake of justice, and that he may render to every man his due, such a laborer is continually building up in himself one of the greatest principles of morality and religion. Every blow on the anvil, on the earth, or whatever material he works upon, contributes something to the perfection of his nature.

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Nor is this all. Labor is a school of benevolence as well as justice. A man to support himself must serve others. He must do or produce something for their comfort or gratification. This is one of the beautiful ordinations of Providence, that, to get a living, a man must be useful. Now this usefulness ought to be an end in his labor as truly as to earn his living. He ought to think of the benefit of those he works for, as well as of his own; and in so doing, in desiring amidst his sweat and toil to serve others as well as himself, he is exercising and growing in benevolence as truly as if he were distributing bounty with a large hand to the poor. Such a motive hallows and dignifies the commonest pursuit.

Again. Labor may be so performed as to be a high impulse to the mind. Be a man's vocation what it may, his

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rule should be to do its duties perfectly, to do the best he can, and thus to make perpetual progress in his art. In other words, Perfection should be proposed; and this I urge not only for its usefulness to society, nor for the sincere pleasure which a man takes in seeing a work well done.

THE STRENGTHENING INFLUENCE OF DIFFICULTY

There is one circumstance attending all conditions of life which may and ought to be turned to the use of self-culture. Every condition, be it what it may, has hardships, hazards, pains. We try to escape them; we pine for a sheltered lot, for a smooth path, for cheering friends, and unbroken success. But Providence ordains storms, disasters, hostilities, sufferings; and the great question, whether we shall live to

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any purpose or not, whether we shall grow strong in mind and heart, or be weak and pitiable, depends on nothing so much as on our use of these adverse circumstances. Outward evils are designed to school our passions, and to rouse our faculties and virtues into intenser action. Sometimes they seem to create new powers. Difficulty is the element, and resistance the true work of a man. Self-culture never goes on so fast as when embarrassed circumstances, the opposition of men or the elements, unexpected changes of the times, or other forms of suffering, instead of disheartening, throw us on our inward resources, turn us for strength to God, clear up to us the great purpose of life, and inspire calm resolution. No greatness or goodness is worth much, unless tried in these fires.

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CITIZENSHIP AND SELF-CULTURE

I have time to consider but one more means of self-culture. We find it in our Free Government, in our Political relations and duties. It is a great benefit of free institutions that they do much to awaken and keep in action a nation's mind. We are told that the education of the multitude is necessary to the support of a republic; but it is equally true, that a republic is a powerful means of educating the multitude. It is the people's University. In a free state solemn responsibilities are imposed on every citizen; great subjects are to be discust; great interests to be decided. The individual is called to determine measures affecting the well-being of millions and the destinies of posterity. He must consider not only the internal relations of his native land, but its connection with foreign states,

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and judge of a policy which touches the whole civilized world. He is called by his participation in the national sovereignty to cherish public spirit, a regard to the general weal. A man who purposes to discharge faithfully these obligations, is carrying on a generous self-culture. The great public questions which divide opinion around him and provoke earnest discussion, of necessity invigorate his intellect, and accustom him to look beyond himself. He grows up to a robustness, force, enlargement of mind, unknown under despotic rule.

It may be said that I am describing what free institutions ought to do for the character of the individual, not their actual effects; and the objection, I must own, is too true. Our institutions do not cultivate us as they might and should; and the chief cause of the failure is plain. It is the strength of party-

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spirit; and so blighting is its influence, so fatal to self-culture, that I feel myself bound to warn every man against it, who has any desire of improvement. Party spirit is singularly hostile to moral independence. A man in proportion as he sinks into it, sees, hears, judges by the senses and understandings of his party. He surrenders the freedom of a man, the right of using and speaking his own mind, and echoes the applauses or maledictions with which the leaders or passionate partizans see fit that the country should ring.

All parties are kept in check by the spirit of the better portion of people whom they contain. Leaders are always compelled to ask what their party will bear, and to modify their measures so as not to shock the men of principle within their ranks. A good man, not

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tamely subservient to the body with which he acts, but judging it impartially, criticizing it freely, bearing testimony against its evils, and withholding his support from wrong, does good to those around him, and is cultivating generously his own mind.

I respectfully counsel those whom I address to take part in the politics of their country. These are the true discipline of a people, and do much for their education. I counsel you to labor for a clear understanding of the subjects which agitate the community, to make them your study, instead of wasting your leisure in vague, passionate talk about them. The time thrown away by the mass of the people on the rumors of the day, might, if better spent, give them a good acquaintance with the constitution, laws, history, and interests of their country, and thus es-

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tablish them in those great principles by which particular measures are to be determined. In proportion as the people thus improve themselves, they will cease to be the tools of designing politicians: their intelligence, not their passions and jealousies, will be address by those who seek their votes. They will exert, not a nominal, but a real influence on the government and the destinies of the country, and at the same time will forward their own growth in truth and virtue.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

One important topic remains. That great means of self-improvement, Christianity, is yet untouched, and its greatness forbids me now to approach it. I will only say, that if you study Christianity in its original records, and not in human creeds; if you consider its

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clear revelations of God, its life-giving promises of pardon and spiritual strength, its correspondence to man's reason, conscience, and best affections, and its adaptation to his wants, sorrows, anxieties, and fears; if you consider the strength of its proofs, the purity of its precepts, the divine greatness of the character of its author, and the immortality which it opens before us, you will feel yourselves bound to welcome it joyfully, gratefully, as affording aids and incitements to self-culture, which would vainly be sought in all other means.

I have thus presented a few of the means of self-culture. The topics, now discusst, will, I hope, suggest others to those who have honored me with their attention, and create an interest which will extend beyond the present hour. I owe it, however, to truth to make one

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remark. I wish to raise no unreasonable hopes. I must say then, that the means now recommended to you, tho they will richly reward every man of every age who will faithfully use them, will yet not produce their full and happiest effect, except in cases where early education has prepared the mind for future improvement. They whose childhood has been neglected, tho they make progress in future life, can hardly repair the loss of their first years; and I say this, that we may all be excited to save our children from this loss, that we may prepare them, to the extent of our power, for an effectual use of all the means of self-culture, which adult age may bring with it.

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Objections to Self-Culture, and the Answers to Them

III. I am aware that the whole doctrine of this discourse will meet with opposition. There are not a few who will say to me, "What you tell us sounds well; but it is impracticable. Men, who dream in their closets, spin beautiful theories; but actual life scatters them, as the wind snaps the cob-web. You would have all men to be cultivated; but necessity wills that most men shall work; and which of the two is likely to prevail? A weak sentimentality may shrink from the truth; still it is true, that most men were made, not for self-culture, but for toil."

I have put the objection into strong language that we may look it fairly in the face. For one I deny its validity. Reason, as well as sentiment, rises up

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against it. The presumption is certainly very strong that the All-wise Father, who has given to every human being reason and conscience and affection, intended that these should be unfolded; and it is hard to believe, that He, who, by conferring this nature on all men, has made all His children, has destined the great majority to wear out a life of drudgery and unimproving toil, for the benefit of a few. God can not have made spiritual beings to be dwarfed. In the body we see no organs created to shrivel by disuse; much less are the powers of the soul given to be locked up in perpetual lethargy.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MIND

It is Mind, after all, which does the work of the world, so that the more there is of mind, the more work will be accomplished. A man, in proportion

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as he is intelligent, makes a given force accomplish a greater task, makes skill take the place of muscles, and with less labor, gives a better product. Make men intelligent, and they become inventive. They find shorter processes. Their knowledge of nature helps them to turn its laws to account, to understand the substances on which they work, and to seize on useful hints, which experience continually furnishes. It is among workmen that some of the most useful machines have been contrived. Spread education, and as the history of this country shows, there will be no bounds to useful inventions.

The laborer, under his dust and sweat, carries the grand elements of humanity, and he may put forth its highest powers. I doubt not, there is as genuine enthusiasm in the contemplation of nature, and in the perusal of

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works of genius, under a homespun garb as under finery. We have heard of a distinguished author who never wrote so well as when he was full-drest for company. But profound thought, and poetical inspiration, have most generally visited men when, from narrow circumstances or negligent habits, the rent coat and shaggy face have made them quite unfit for polished saloons.

A man may see truth, and may be thrilled with beauty, in one costume or dwelling as well as another, and he should respect himself the more for the hardships under which his intellectual force has been developed.

USING MOMENTS OF LEISURE

A man who follows his calling with industry and spirit, and uses his earnings economically, will always have some portion of the day at command;

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and it is astonishing how fruitful of improvement a short season becomes when eagerly seized and faithfully used. It has often been observed that they who have most time at their disposal, profit by it least. A single hour in the day steadily given to the study of an interesting subject brings unexpected accumulations of knowledge. I have known a man of vigorous intellect, who had enjoyed few advantages of early education, and whose mind was almost engrossed by the details of an extensive business, but who composed a book of much original thought in steamboats and on horseback while visiting distant customers.

The succession of the seasons gives to many of the working class opportunities for intellectual improvement. The winter brings leisure to the husbandman, and winter evenings to many

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laborers in the city. Above all, in Christian countries the seventh day is released from toil. The seventh part of the year, no small portion of existence, may be given by almost every one to intellectual and moral culture. Why is it that Sunday is not made a more effectual means of improvement? Undoubtedly the seventh day is to have a religious character; but religion connects itself with all the great subjects of human thought, and leads to and aids the study of all. God is in nature. God is in history. Instruction in the work of the Creator so as to reveal his perfection in their harmony, beneficence, and grandeur; instruction in the histories of the church and the world so as to show in all events His moral government, and to bring out the great moral lessons in which human life abounds; instruction in the lives of

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philanthropists, of saints, of men eminent for piety and virtue; all these branches of teaching enter into religion, and are appropriate to Sunday; and, through these, a vast amount of knowledge may be given to the people. Sunday ought not to remain the dull and fruitless season that it now is to the multitudes. It may be clothed with a new interest and a new sanctity. It may give a new impulse to the nation's soul.

CHOOSING PLEASURES THAT BENEFIT

But some will say, "Be it granted that the working classes may find some leisure; should they not be allowed to spend it in relaxation? Is it not cruel to summon them from toils of the hand to toils of the mind? They have earned pleasure by the day's toil, and ought to partake it." Yes, let them have

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pleasure. Far be it from me to dry up the fountains, to blight the spots of verdure, where they refresh themselves after life's labors. But I maintain that self-culture multiplies and increases their pleasures, that it creates new capacities of enjoyment, that it saves their leisure from being, what it too often is, dull and wearisome, that it saves them from rushing for excitement to indulgences destructive to body and soul. It is one of the great benefits of self-improvement that it raises a people above the gratifications of the brute, and gives them pleasure worthy of men.

I have a strong hope that by the progress of intelligence, taste, and morals among all portions of society, a class of public amusements will grow up among us bearing some resemblance to the theater, but purified from the

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gross evils which degrade our present stage, and which, I trust, will seal its ruin. Dramatic performances and recitations are means of bringing the mass of the people into a quicker sympathy with a writer of genius, to a profounder comprehension of his grand, beautiful, touching conceptions, than can be effected by the reading of the closet. No commentary throws such a light on a great poem or any impassioned work of literature as the voice of a reader or speaker, who brings to the task a deep feeling of his author and rich and various powers of expression. A crowd, electrified by a sublime thought, or softened into a humanizing sorrow under such a voice, partake a pleasure at once exquisite and refined; and I can not but believe, that this and other amusements, at which the delicacy of woman and the purity of the Christian can take

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no offense, are to grow up under a higher social culture. Let me only add, that in proportion as culture spreads among a people, the cheapest and commonest of all pleasures, conversation, increases in delight. This, after all, is the great amusement of life, cheering us round our hearths, often cheering our work, stirring our hearts gently, acting on us like the balmy air, or the bright light of heaven, so silently and continually, that we hardly think of its influence. The source of happiness is not too often lost to men of all classes for want of knowledge, mental activity, and refinement of feeling; and do we defraud the laborer of his pleasure by recommending to him improvements which will place the daily, hourly, blessings of conversation within his reach?

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MODERN SOCIAL PROGRESS

I conclude with recalling to you the happiest feature of our age, and that is, the progress of the mass of the people in intelligence, self-respect, and all the comforts of life. What a contrast does the present form with past times! Not many ages ago the nation was the property of one man, and all its interests were staked in perpetual games of war, for no end but to build up his family, or to bring new territories under his yoke. Society was divided into two classes, the high-born and the vulgar, separated from one another by a great gulf, as impassable as that between the saved and the lost. The people had no significance as individuals, but formed a mass, a machine to be wielded at pleasure, by their lords. In war, which was the great sport of the times, those brave knights of whose prowess we hear

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cased themselves and their horses in armor so as to be almost invulnerable, while the common people on foot were left without protection, to be hewn to pieces or trampled down by their betters.

Who that compares the condition of Europe a few years ago with the present state of the world, but must bless God for the change. The grand distinction of modern time is the emerging of the people from brutal degradation, the gradual recognition of their rights, the gradual diffusion among them of the means of improvement, and happiness, the creation of a new power in the state, the power of the people. And it is worthy remark, that this revolution is due in a great degree to religion, which, in the hands of the crafty and aspiring, had bowed the multitude to the dust, but which, in the fulness of time, began

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to fulfil its mission of freedom. It was religion, which by teaching men their relation to God awakened in them the consciousness of their importance as individuals. It was the struggle for religious rights which opened men's eyes to all their rights. It was resistance to religious usurpation which led men to withstand political oppression. It was religious discussion which roused the minds of all classes to free and vigorous thought. It was religion which armed the martyr and patriot in England against arbitrary power, which embraced the spirits of our fathers against the perils of the ocean and wilderness, and sent them to found here the freest and most equal state on earth.

THE GREAT NEED OF THE DAY

Let us thank God for what has been gained. But let us not think everything

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gained. Let the people feel that they have only started in the race. How much remains to be done! What a vast amount of ignorance, intemperance, coarseness, sensuality, may still be found in our community! What a vast amount of mind is palsied and lost! When we think that every house might be cheered by intelligence, disinterestedness, and refinement, and then remember in how many houses the higher powers and affections of human nature are buried as in tombs, what a darkness gathers over society! And how few of us are moved by this moral desolation? How few understand that to raise the deprest, by a wise culture, to the dignity of men, is the highest end of the social state? Shame on us, that the worth of a fellow-creature is so little felt.

I would that I could speak with an

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awakening voice to the people of their wants, their privileges, their responsibilities. I would say to them, "*You can not, without guilt and disgrace, stop where you are. The past and the present call on you to advance. Let what you have gained be an impulse to something higher. Your nature is too great to be crushed. You were not created what you are, merely to toil, eat, drink, and sleep, like the inferior animals. If you will you can rise. No power in society, no hardship in your condition can depress you, keep you down, in knowledge, power, virtue, influence, but by your own consent. Do not be lulled to sleep by the flatteries which you hear, as if your participation in the national sovereignty made you equal to the noblest of your race. You have many and great deficiencies to be remedied; and the remedy lies, not in*

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the ballot-box, not in the exercise of your political powers, but in the faithful education of yourselves and your children. These truths you have often heard and slept over. Awake! Resolve earnestly on Self-culture. Make yourselves worthy of your free institutions, and strengthen and perpetuate them by your intelligence and your virtues."

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Christ, the master speaker



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